(c) whether any norms have been issued by the Central Electricity Regulatory Authority (CERA) to reimburse service tax to power transmission firms; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) As per the information provided by Ministry of Finance, the issue regarding levy of service tax on power transmission is pending decision before the Customs, Excise and Service Tax Appellate Tribunal (CESTAT). Based on the stay order of the CESTAT in the matter of Madhya Pradesh Power Transmission Company Limited Versus Commissioner of Central Excise, Bhopal [(reported in 2008) 15 Service Tax Today 222 (New Delhi - CESTAT)] protective show cause notices have been issued to power transmission companies demanding service tax.

(c) and (d) Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. (PGCIL) through Petition No.62/2009 filed with Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) has sought permission to bill and recover from the respondents the service tax for the period 01.05.2006 to 30.09.2008, together with education cess, interest, penalty, if any, chargeable in terms of Section 64 of the Finance Act, 1994. The CERC has adjourned the matter sine die with liberty to the petitioner to approach the CERC if so required, after a decision of the Tax authorities.

Coal supply to power stations

3504. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is big gap between supply and requirement of Coal-based utility Thermal Power Stations for 2009 and 2010; and

(b) if so, how the target would be achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI BHARATSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The coal requirement for meeting the generation target and building coal stock upto normative level for the year 2009-10 was assessed as 404 Million Tonne (MT) and the coal requirement for the year 2010-11 has been estimated as 444 Million Tonne. Against this requirement, the indigenous coal availability is expected to be 363 during the year 2009-10 and 388 Million Tonne during 2010-11, leaving a shortfall of 41 Million Tonne and 56 Million Tonne in the respective year. To bridge the gap, power utilities have been advised to import 28.7 Million Tonne (equivalent to 41 MT of domestic coal because of higher calorific value of imported coal) during 2009-10. It is also proposed to import coal to bridge the gap between its requirement and availability from domestic sources during the year 2010-11.

Maharatna status for NTPC

3505. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to upgrade the status of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) from Navratna to Maharatna company;